

## Message Text

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USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

AMCONSUL FLORENCE

AMCONSUL GENOA

AMCONSUL PALERMO

AMCONSUL TRIESTE

AMCONSUL TURIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 11741

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT, UR, PO

SUBJECT: CHALLENGES TO PCI'S CLAIM OF AUTONOMY FROM  
SOVIET INFLUENCE

SUMMARY: THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF THE ITALIAN AND SOVIET  
COMMUNIST PARTIES ON DETENTE AND PORTUGAL, AND THE PCI'S  
CAREFULLY PHRASED COMMENTS ON A RECENT PRAVDA ARTICLE RE-  
AFFIRMING THE INDISPENSABILITY OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE  
PROLETARIAT FOR SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, HAVE REVIVED DEBATE  
ON THE EXTENT OF THE PCI'S VAUNTED AUTONOMY FROM SOVIET  
INFLUENCE. WITH APPARENTLY CALCULATED ASSISTS FROM ITALY'S  
MAJOR LEFTIST NEWSPAPERS, PARTICULARLY CORRIERE DELLA  
SERA AND IL MESSAGGERO, THE PCI APPEARS TO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY  
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FINESSED THE ISSUE. ITS IMAGE AS A DEMOCRATIC AND AUTONO-  
MOUS PARTY IS NOT LIKELY TO SUFFER BEFORE THE ITALIAN PUBLIC.  
END SUMMARY.

1. DESPITE THE COLLAPSING OPPOSITION OF ALL CENTER-LEFT PARTIES TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNISTS (PCI) IN THE FORMATION OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS, TWO SIMULTANEOUS INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS HAVE REVIVED POLEMICS OVER THE PCI'S VAUNTED CLAIM OF AUTONOMY FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY: THE JOINT PCI-CPSU COMMUNIQUE (PRINTED IN UNITA, AUGUST 8), WHICH RESULTED FROM TALKS BETWEEN DELEGATIONS OF THE PCI AND CPSU IN MOSCOW; AND THE PCI'S REACTION TO A PRAVDA ARTICLE REAFFIRMING THE VALIDITY OF LENIN'S CLASSIC PRESCRIPTIONS FOR THE MAKING AND CONSOLIDATION OF REVOLUTIONS.

2. ACCORDING TO UNITA, THE PCI DELEGATION TO MOSCOW WAS MADE UP OF SECRETARIAT MEMBER GIANCARLO PAJETTA, DIRECTORATE MEMBER AND PARLIAMENTARY LEADER ALLESSANDRO NATTA, AND SECRETARIAT MEMBER GIOVANNI CERVETTI. THEY HAD AN "EXCHANGE OF VIEWS" AUGUST 7-8 ON SOME INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS AND THE WORLD COMMUNIST MOVEMENT WITH PCUS CENTRAL COMMITTEE SECRETARY ANDREI KIRILENKO, BORIS PONOMARIOV, SUPPLEMENTARY MEMBER OF THE POLITICAL OFFICE, AND VADIM ZAGLADIN OF THE CENTRAL CONTROL COMMITTEE. ASIDE FROM APPROVAL OF THE HELSINKI SUMMIT RESULTS AND GENERAL PLATITUDES ABOUT DETENTE, DISARMAMENT AND PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE, THE COMMUNIQUE'S MOST INTERESTING POINTS IN THE ITALIAN CONTEXT WERE: (1) CITATION OF THE PCI'S RECENT ELECTORAL SUCCESS AS A PROOF THAT PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE CREATES THE CONDITIONS FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS IN THE WORLD; AND (2) THE JOINT EXPRESSION OF "SOLIDARITY WITH THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS AND THE OTHER DEMOCRATIC FORCES OF PORTUGAL." "PREOCCUPATION" IS EXPRESSED OVER THE ATTACKS NOW BEING SUFFERED BY THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS, AND BOTH PARTIES CALL FOR "UNITY OF ACTION BY THE PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES, THE COMMUNISTS, THE SOCIALISTS AND ALL THE PROGRESSIVE FORCES OF THE LEFT..."

3. UNITA'S REPORT ON THE MEETING WITH THE PCSI WAS FLANKED BY EDITORIAL ON PORTUGAL EMPHASIZING SAME POINTS, BUT ADDING THAT THE PCI'S POSITION ON PORTUGAL ALWAYS TAKEN IN "FULL AUTONOMY" CONFIDENTIAL

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AND WITHOUT SHIRKING POLEMICS "WITH OTHER COMMUNIST PARTIES AND WITH PORTUGUESE COMRADES THEMSELVES". THE PCI'S OWN DIRECT EXPERIENCE IN ITS ANTI-FASCIST STRUGGLE IS CITED AS EVIDENCE OF THE NEED FOR SOLIDARITY AMONG ALL PARTIES PROFESSING SOCIALISM IN PORTUGAL, IN ORDER TO ISOLATE AND DEFEAT REACTION. FOR THE REST, UNITA HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTING ACTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS, AND HARSHLY CRITICIZING THE "SILENCE" OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND OTHERS IN THE FACE OF "FACIST REACTION" IN PORTUGAL.

4. THE PRAVDA ARTICLE REFERRED TO ABOVE IS BY ZARADOV. IT REAFFIRMS LENIN'S THESIS THAT THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY IS THE PROLOGUE OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, INSISTS ON THE INDISPENSA-

BILITY OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT "TO REPRESS THE FORCES OF REACTION", CONTRASTS THE (NECESSARY) POLITICAL MAJORITY TO THE (UNNECESSARY) ARITHMETIC MAJORITY, AND ATTACKS TODAY'S COMPROMISERS FOR FAILING TO SAFEGUARD THE AUTONOMY OF THE PROLETARIAN PARTY, AND FOR DISSOLVING IT IN "IDEOLOGICALLY AMORPHOUS" ALLIANCES ACCORDING TO THE FORMULA "UNITY AT ANY COST". (THE LATTER POINT ESPECIALLY DIRECTLY CONTRADICTS PCI POLICY IN ITALY.)

5. THOUGH PASSAGES FROM IT HAVE APPEARED IN THE WIRE SERVICES AND IN THE CENTER-RIGHT PRESS IN ITALY, UNITA AND THE LESS OFFICIAL COMMUNIST DAILY PAESE SERA HAVE REPRODUCED NONE OF IT. LEMONDE'S COMMENT, WIDELY REPORTED IN ITALY, THAT THE ZARADOV ARTICLE WAS A CRITICISM OF WEST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES, PROMPTED A SHORT REPLY BY UNITA AUGUST 9. ZARADOV IS QUOTED BY UNITA AS STATING THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTS IS AN INDISPENSABLE CONDITION FOR THE VICTORY OF THE REVOLUTION, AND THAT THE POPULAR MAJORITY IS A POLITICAL, RATHER THAN AN ARITHMETIC CONCEPT. LATTER POINT IS EXPLICITLY CONCEDED BY UNITA WITH THE PROVISIO THAT A SOCIALIST SOCIETY CANNOT BE CONSTRUCTED WITHOUT THE "CONSENT" OF AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE "WORKING PEOPLE". IN ITALY, UNITA ELABORATES, "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE EVEN TO GOVERN WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES AND THEIR PARTIES." ON THE OTHER-HAND, UNITA JUDGES "DEBATABLE" ZARADOV'S ATTEMPT TO REDUCE LENIN'S THOUGHT TO A SINGLE CONCEPT. THE PCI, IT SAYS, HAS ITS LINE IN WHICH "DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM ARE INTERTWINED

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AND RECIPROCALLY ENRICH EACH OTHER...."

6. IN A LATER NOTE (AUGUST 12) UNITA "CONFIRMS": (1) THAT IT REJECTS THE PRETENSE (OF, PRESUMABLY, THE SOVIETS) TO DICTATE RIGID AND GENERAL RULES BOTH BECAUSE MONOLITHISM IS LONG FINISHED, AND BECAUSE IT WOULD BE ABSURD TO IGNORE, THEORETICALLY, THE VARIETIES OF EXPERIENCES AND SITUATIONS OF TODAY, AND (2) THAT THE PCI "UNDERSTANDS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM VERY DIFFERENTLY FROM THAT DELINEATED IN ZARADOV'S "DOCTRINAIRE OUTLINE". IN GENERAL, UNITA DOWNPLAYS SIGNIFICANCE OF ZARADOV ARTICLE BY CHARACTERIZING IT AS THE EXPRESSION OF A PARTICULAR POINT OF VIEW, IN CONTRAST WITH OTHERS APPEARING EVEN IN THE SOVIET UNION. (A DIFFERING, BUT UNSPECIFIED, INTERPRETATION OF LENIN'S THOUGHT WHICH APPEARED IN ULRAINSKAYA PRAVA IS CITED AS AN EXAMPLE.)

7. CRITICS, ESPECIALLY ON THE CENTER-RIGHT (IL TEMPO, LA NAZIONE) HAVE EMPHASIZED THAT THE PCI HAS EVADED A DIRECT REBUTTAL OF ZARADOV'S THESIS, DENYING ONLY THAT HIS FORMULA FOR REVOLUTION CANNOT BE APPLIED MECHANICALLY WITHOUT REGARD TO LOCAL SITUATIONS, AND CONSIDER MOST OMINOUS THE PCI'S EXPLICIT ACCEPTANCE OF ZARADOV'S CONCEPT OF THE "MAJORITY" AS

"POLITICAL" RATHER THAN "ARITHMETIC". THIS CRITICISM IS COUPLED WITH THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE TALKS BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES IN MOSCOW. THEY POINT OUT THAT THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE CONTAINS NONE OF THE RINGING COMMITMENT TO THE PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF WESTERN DEMOCRACY PRESENT IN THAT WHICH RESULTED FROM THE RECENT MEETING BETWEEN THE SPANISH AND ITALIAN COMMUNIST LEADERS. THAT THE ITALIANS WENT TO MOSCOW IN THE FIRST PLACE, AND SIGNED WITH THE RUSSIANS A COMMUNIQUE WHICH CONTAINS NO REFERENCE TO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM OVER PORTUGAL OR OTHER MATTERS IS ADDUCED AS EVIDENCE THAT THE PCI IS STILL SUBJECT TO SOVIET INFLUENCE.

8. AN AUGUST 13 ATTACK BY IL TEMPO DISMISSES AS OBVIOUS BUT IRRELEVANT, THE PCI'S DEFENSE THAT THE COMMUNIST WORLD IS NO LONGER MONOLITHIC. IT DOCUMENTS BREZHNEV'S FORMAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE "DIFFERENT ROADS TO COMMUNISM" THESIS, AND STATES THAT THE DISTURBING THING FOR ITALY IS THAT THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS SHOW THAT BREZHNEV AND BERLINGUER AGREE ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION, PORTUGAL AND THE CONFIDENTIAL

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HISTORIC COMPROMISE (AS A TACTIC).

9. COMMENT: CRITICS OF THE PCI APPEAR TO HAVE WON MOST OF THE DEBATING POINTS, BUT APPEAR TO HAVE LOST THE ARGUMENT IN TERMS OF ITS EFFECT IN BRINGING THE PCI'S DEMOCRATIC CREDENTIALS INTO DOUBT BEFORE THE ITALIAN PUBLIC. THE PCI HAS, AT LEAST THUS FAR, SUCCESSFULLY FINESSED THE ISSUE A) BY GIVING IT AS LITTLE PROMINENCE AS POSSIBLE, AND B) BY THE SUPPORT IT HAS RECEIVED FROM MOST OF THE LEFTIST PRESS, NOTABLY CORRIERE DELLA SERA. UNITA'S DELAYED, SHORT, AND TORTUROUSLY PHRASED COMMENTS HAVE BEEN INTERPRETED BY CORRIERE DELLA SERA AND ROME'S SOCIALIST ORIENTED LARGEST DAILY IL MESSAGGERO (AMONG OTHERS) AS A RINGING REJECTION OF ATTEMPTED SOVIET DICTATION; AND THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE IS INTERPRETED A SOVIET SURRENDER TO PCI VIEWS (BECAUSE IT FAVORABLY MENTIONS THE PCI'S ELECTION SUCCESS AND CALLS FOR UNITY OF THE LEFT IN PORTUGAL).

10. THE MOST DISCOURAGING ASPECT OF THESE INTERPRETATIONS IS THE RESORT TO DELIBERATE DISTORTION TO CREATE THESE IMPRESSIONS. CORRIERE FOR EXAMPLE HEADLINES IN QUOTES THAT THE PCI HAD REPLIED "WE HAVE OUR OWN LINE AND WE BELIEVE IN DEMOCRACY"; THE LATTER PHRASE NOWHERE APPEARS IN UNITA'S COMMENT. IL MESSAGGERO CONVENIENTLY OMITTED IN HEADLINE AND STORY THE ADJECTIVE "WORKING" IN CITING UNITA'S COMMENT THAT A SOCIALIST SOCIETY CANNOT BE CONSTRUCTED WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE "WORKING PEOPLE". IT DOES NOT EVEN REPORT THE ZARADOV DISTINCTION UNITA ACCEPTS BETWEEN ARITHMETIC AND POLITICAL MAJORITIES, AND DISTORTS A WORRIED COMMENT BY SOCIALIST LEADER (VITORELLI) WHO SEES IN THE ZARADOV PIECE EVIDENCE THAT THE SOVIETS ARE WEAVING A WEB AROUND WESTERN

COMMUNIST PARTIES WHICH THE PCI IS FINDING DIFFICULT TO UNRAVEL.  
(HE, HOWEVER CONCLUDES THAT ALL SHOULD THEREFORE ASSIST THE  
PCI IN MAKING THE NECESSARY STEPS.) FOR MESSAGGERO, VITORELLI  
SAID THAT THE SOVIETS ARE "TRYING" TO DO THIS, BUT "BEING RE-  
BUFFED" BY THE PCI AND PCF.

11. UNITA'S COMMENTS ON ZARADOV ARTICLE AND TEXT OF JOINT  
COMMUNIQUE WITH SOVIETS BEING TRANSLATED AND POUCHED TO  
DEPARTMENT.VOLPE

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